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ATTN : Chief St/I
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1 August 1958

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Debriefing [REDACTED] by GRR personnel.
Date of Information: May 1958.

A. Lecture Summary

1. Itinerary:

Helsinki - Moscow; rail
Moscow - Irkutsk; rail (5 days enroute, 2 days in Irkutsk)
Irkutsk - Odessa - Kiev; air
Kiev - Chop - Prague - Cheb; rail

2. Finnish sympathies appear largely divided - pro-west and pro-Soviet.

3. Finnish steam locomotive hauls the Leningrad-Moscow bound train 8 miles into USSR territory; i.e., from Vammala to Vyborg.

4. Source noted an electric locomotive, 5700 HP stored near Leningrad. (b & w*)

5. Source reports a 4 minute headway for Leningrad subway trains, 2 minute headway for Moscow subway.

6. Source engaged in prolific photography and encountered only 4 rather minor objections, which he cleverly obviated.

7. Source obtained a photo of the MU car shop in Leningrad (b & w).

8. The rail line is electrified at least 60 kms west of Leningrad.

9. Source estimates about 60 percent of Soviet rolling stock is 4-axis. (Comment: This statistic is probably from Holland Hunter's publication rather than from observation.)

* b & w designates a black and white photo, already furnished to the Agency [REDACTED]

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10. Switches and turnouts are believed to be no limiting factor on traffic movement.

11. Double-track electrification was accomplished by means of an individually supported catenary on each track, in contrast to the usual US method of suspending the catenary across both tracks.

12. Source obtained photo of the Leningrad rail yards (b & w).

13. Leningrad subway station on the Neva side seemed exceptionally deep; the time required to reach the surface on the escalator was about 2 minutes.

14. Soviet diesel locomotives are built high and accessible for maintenance purposes.

15. Revised (summer 1958) schedule for the overnight express from Leningrad to Moscow is 0020 - 0815, representing speed-up of over an hour. Mostly business types and their wives were observed on this run.

16. Motive power from Leningrad to Moscow included a 4,000 HP diesel electric locomotive.

17. Relatively slow passenger schedules are probably due to coordination with freight schedules rather than track conditions.

18. Intourist guide, who generally vacationed in the Carpathians, told source the roads were bad, and that a small car was practical.

19. Source has photo (b & w) of oil-fired steam locomotive; serial number 3-708-76.

20. Source estimates 2/3 of motor traffic in the USSR to be trucks.

21. Source has photo (color) of Pobeda cabs at the Kursk station in Moscow.

22. Railroad passenger agents use a guide about the size of a World Airlines Guide, apparently not in general circulation.

23. The editorial board of Gudok (already reported by name and photo) gave source the impression of capability, but was not communicative.

24. Suburban lines were electrified up to about 60 kms outside of major cities.

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25. Rail used around Moscow was generally 104 lbs. with anti-creeper.
26. A great deal of crushed rock ballast was observed on main lines.
27. The Trans-Siberian express is pulled by an electric locomotive from Moscow. [REDACTED]
28. Each passenger car is heated independently, thereby avoiding possible delay resulting from frozen train lines. Only 4 passengers in source's car, 3 foreigners and one unidentified Russian.
29. Roadbed and track on the Trans-Siberian run (Moscow-Irkutsk) was excellent. Source observed "many" concrete tie sections, well scattered, but concrete ties were never mixed with wood ties in the same section of track.
30. Motive power changed to modern steam (4-8-4, 48,500 lb. tractive effort, built at Kharkov) at some little distance from Moscow on Trans-Siberian run.
31. There were always 2 firemen on steam locomotives, regardless of automatic stoking.
32. Average engine run was 5 hours at about 35 m.p.h.
33. Engines were changed at most division points.
34. Source has photo (b & w) of a TE-3 diesel locomotive running as a single unit; observed the single unit TE-3 pulling 10 or 11 passenger cars at 50 MPH with no apparent strain.
35. Source observed no high-speed turnouts on the Moscow-Irkutsk run.
36. Source saw no pipeline construction in evidence on the Moscow-Irkutsk run.
37. Source experienced excellent service on trains. A full course meal averaged about \$4.00 on the diner at the tourist rate of exchange.
38. Total cost of source's tour within the Soviet Union was \$907.00.
39. Passenger stations on the Trans-Sib are varnished, rather than painted; source has color photos of several.

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40. Old steam locomotive built in Schenectady in 1917 was used for train watering. Source has photo which caused one of the 4 altercations with police.

41. Source has photo (color) of train load of virgin lands settlers, made up of obsolete equipment.

42. Source has photo (color) of old steam locomotive with radio, [REDACTED] on the Tuusk RR.

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43. No train-order operation was observed anywhere along the route. The Trans-Sib to Irkutsk was entirely operated by automatic block signalling.

44. A number of locomotives still are fitted with the old screw type couplers in addition to automatic couplers, although virtually all rolling stock observed was fitted with automatic couplers.

45. Diesel traction was used from Vagay to Nazavayevska on the Trans-Siberian. A relatively fast schedule was maintained from Nazavayevska to Omsk despite stops when meeting westbound trains.

46. Source observed excellent progress on street paving in Irkutsk, including much asphalt paving.

47. At the Angara Dam construction site, source observed 4 turbines in service even though construction is not yet completed. Engineer boasted that all equipment used was not only made in the USSR, but in Siberia. Source also was told that a railroad is to be built across the Angara Dam into Irkutsk.

48. Source was driven to Qyakh, a collective farm village about 35 miles north of Irkutsk over a good road. Schoolhouse had surprisingly modern facilities including physics and chemistry labs.

49. Source observed 30-40 big commercial aircraft at Irkutsk airport. The runways were concrete and very long.

The flight to Odesa from Irkutsk was made on a TU-104 at 33,000 feet averaging 600 MPH. Route was along the Trans-Siberian Railroad from Novosibirsk to Omsk and weather was excellent. Source observed Duskaya and Omsk freight yards from this vantage point and reports a great deal of activity. Several trains were moving slowly at close intervals from east to west approaching Omsk. Source estimates all yards he observed to be operating at "near capacity for efficient operation." All yards also were well-lighted.

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50. The flight from Odessa to Kiev was in a 21 passenger twin-engine aircraft. Rough in comparison to the TU-104.

51. Source observed only one suspension bridge in the USSR - at Kiev.

52. The railroad bridge at Kiev is single-track but with standby replacement materials, so that it could probably be rebuilt within 24 hours. Railroad employee objected to taking of this photo but source flashed a press card and jumped on the train avoiding confiscation.

53. Source was told that Kiev was 70 percent parkland, and observation tended to confirm this statement.

54. All streetcars observed in the USSR had two operators, mostly women. The Railroad ministry operates the streetcars (deduced from uniforms and insignia).

55. Source was told that the railroad station in Odessa (color photo) was rebuilt, after the Rumanians bombed it out, with donated labor.

56. Odessa Port:

Docks and installations are directly below the main part of the city. A funicular railway is used for access.

57. Chop:

The coupler and truck change for international railway cars at Chop required 20 to 25 minutes. (b & w photos) Source estimates international railway cars to be about one foot less in height and to be one foot narrower than standard Soviet passenger cars. There are 4 rails at the transshipment point, with a lateral adjustment accomplished by means of jacks.

58. The Czechoslovakian railways were in excellent condition; the Chop to Prague line has been extensively rebuilt including tunnels.

59. The following locomotive types were observed in general use on the Czech railroad:

0-4-4-0 passenger electric
2-10-0 steam freight
4-8-4 steam passenger

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B. Specific Questions and Answers

Q: One of the photographs you submitted to us was ^{of} an all-purpose freight car. Did you see this type of freight car in use?

A: I did not see this type of freight car in use anywhere.

Q: After having observed the Russian railroads in operation, do you believe that their announced performance data (ton kilometer of freight handled) are exaggerated?

A: I see no reason to question their announced performance. The USSR railroads are extremely active and move vast tonnages. I believe railroad people in this country could do a better job in railroad operation given the requirements for traffic movement and a plant of the size available to the USSR. However, the USSR railroad administration appears to be doing an extremely good job with the plant available to it.

Q: Did you get the impression that the USSR railroads are operating at near capacity?

A: The USSR railroads are moving an extremely high density of traffic on a relatively small network. The USSR railroad officials appear to be aware of the necessity to increase capacity. They have programs for electrification and dieselization. However, in order to derive the full benefit of these programs they will have to expand their yards, lengthen their yard tracks and sidings. I believe that sidings and yard tracks which limit the length of the trains are the chief limiting factor on the capacity of their system. The Trans-Siberian Railroad appears to be operating at near capacity. However, the railroads I observed in the Ukraine had much less density and were unquestionably operating at a rate much below capacity.

Q: In traveling east from Novosibirsk did you see any evidence of pipeline construction?

A: No, I did not.

Q: You have pointed out that there is extremely high train density east of Omsk on the Trans-Siberian railroad. How do the Russians cope with accidents and hot boxes that occur on these high density sections.

A: I didn't see an accident or a hot box, and I don't think they have many hot boxes. The cars appear to be well-lubricated and the railroad system appear to be well-policed so that there would be no pilferage or waste. In addition, the trains are relatively short, possibly 50 cars, and on the steam operating

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sections the starts are slow so that the axles are well lubricated when the train reaches running speed. Also, sidings and switches are found at frequent intervals so that if a hot box should occur a train could be pulled into a siding rather quickly. I never saw a train in trouble.

Q: What types of ballast did you observe?

A: Gravel, sand and crushed rock. The ballast was quite good on the main lines, but on sidings and in yards the ballast frequently consisted of sand. This is a logical use of ballast.

Q: You had an opportunity to observe motor vehicle traffic in Leningrad and Moscow. How did this traffic look?

A: The traffic was relatively light and consisted of a preponderance of truck traffic - about 2/3.

Q: As a result of observing the density of traffic on the Trans-Siberian railroad between Omsk and Irkutsk what feel did you get for the through capability in terms of trains each way per day on this stretch of line?

A: I would say that based on the activity I observed on this stretch of railroad, the through capability for train movement between Omsk and Irkutsk would be roughly 60 trains each way per day, averaging about 50 cars per freight train.

Q: As you traveled east from Omsk to Irkutsk did you notice any decrease in the train density when you had passed Novosibirsk?

A: There may have been some drop off in train density as I passed Novosibirsk. However, I had the impression of intense activity throughout this trip. It was very seldom that a freight train was not in sight from the passenger train on which I was riding throughout this trip. The yards were well occupied by cars and, although the locomotive sheds appear to be relatively small, there were a large number of locomotives in evidence in the vicinity of these facilities.

Q: Did you have an opportunity to observe the locomotive servicing and repair facilities at Barabinsk?

A: No.

Q: What type of signalling did you observe on the Trans-Siberian between Omsk and Irkutsk?

A: They appeared to have a system similar to our automatic bloc signalling system.

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Q: Was the flight by air from Brintsk to Moscow in the TU-104 uncomfortable and noisy?

A: The flight (a sellout) was very comfortable. There were three hostesses on board the plane, and the flight was not noisy. The majority of the passengers were military.

Q: You observed subway stations in Leningrad and Moscow. What headway was maintained by the subway trains?

A: Four minutes in Leningrad and two minutes in Moscow.

Q: What was the condition of the motive power that you observed?

A: The motive power appeared to be well maintained and the locomotive crew appeared to take great pride in the appearance of their equipment. I saw them removing grease with kerosene, and polishing the locomotives on several occasions.

Q: What overall impression did you get of railroad performance in the USSR?

A: I got the impression that the Russians have a good railroad plant, that it is well operated, and that it is doing a satisfactory job. I think, however, that the US railroad men could do a better job under similar circumstances. I think that this system is more comparable to our system than any I have observed in my travels abroad, and that we could go in there and take over the Russian railroads and operate them effectively in a relatively short period of time.

Q: You spent some time in the GUM department store in Moscow. Did you see anything worth buying?

A: The products available appeared to be all of domestic production. The cameras which appealed to me appeared to be very well made and were not out of line in price, considering the favorable ruble rate given to tourists.

Q: You met the editorial board of Gudok, the railroad newspaper. What impression did you form of these newspaper people?

A: All except one appeared to be quite competent in railroading. One was a civil engineer, another a mechanical engineer. They all appeared to have had railroad experience. I believe they are required to publish a certain amount of propaganda and human interest material in their newspaper, but they seem to relate reliable information from time to time. Their news must be of

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professional interest, and since at least some of it can be checked on by their readers, it has to be reasonably accurate.

Q: Did you see any rolling stock in storage?

A: No. I did see old 2 axle cars being used as camp cars, however.

Q: Did you observe any inefficiency; were there instances when the railroad personnel did not appear to know what they were doing?

A: I observed no sloppy railroading. Service was excellent and on time performance exceptionally good.

Q: What was your general impression of the rolling stock?

A: I observed a great deal of new rolling stock, with many special types for specific industrial jobs. None appeared especially built for military purposes, however. Buffers are still retained on railroad cars.

Q: Did you observe any freight cars for the transport of cement?

A: Many. The Soviets use both the covered hopper and container types.

Q: What is the Russian approach to the "hot box" problem?

A: Principally wide use of the roller bearing; also increase of the bearing surface to 160° instead of 140°.

C. Miscellaneous Comments [REDACTED] 25X1X6

1. I believe the USSR to be interested in an exchange visit of railway personnel.

2. The Trans-Siberian railroad will soon reach capacity operation unless there is rather extensive investment, especially in yards and sidings.

3. Railroad tracks are always more widely separated at bridges and culverts. The longer the crossing, the wider the spread seems to be the rule.

4. There is a striking lack of mechanization in track maintenance. About 70 percent of this type of labor was female.

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5. Troops were observed extensively engaging in new rail construction with little machinery.

6. Many snow fences were observed and snow removal is probably routine, as with the Canadians.

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